

2014-15 City of Kannapolis Façade & Site Improvement Matching Grant

The City of Kannapolis is offering a Façade and Site Improvement Matching Grant in conjunction with its Corridor Appearance Improvement Initiative. The purpose of the grant is to encourage and assist property and business owners located in the corridor focus areas to improve the appearance of the facades of their buildings, their landscaping, and other site improvements.

Award Amounts

Applicants are eligible to receive up to 50% of the project cost up to \$20,000, depending on the scope of the project. The award is limited to 50% of the total eligible costs of a project. Applicants are responsible for the other 50% of the project cost. This is a reimbursement program – applicants must complete and pay for the total project cost or total private match prior to receiving a reimbursement from this grant.

Eligible Applicants

Applicants must be located in a corridor focus area. For 2014, only properties along S. Cannon Blvd between I-85 and First Street are eligible.

Applicants may be property owners or business owners. Any City of Kannapolis elected official, staff, or their spouse or family member is ineligible for the grant.

Although non-for-profit applicants are permitted, the City may give priority to applicants with a for-profit commercial building. Use of the building must conform to all current codes and ordinances; non-conforming uses are generally not allowed. Non-conforming situations will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Ineligible applicants include adult businesses, gambling including sweepstakes and cyber/internet cafes, and new construction projects. No home-based businesses or new construction projects are eligible.

All real property taxes must be paid in full, and the applicant must be current on their water & sewer account, business license, and any City fees. Any identified code violations must be addressed and resolved prior to payment of grant funds.

Eligible Improvements

Eligible improvements include but are not limited to the following:

- Exterior painting, residing, or professional cleaning
- Repair or installation of awnings, canopies, or shutters
- Installation of appropriately scaled windows for retail displays or for visual access into the building
- Installation of appropriate lighting for the purpose of illuminating signage, the parking lot, or the exterior of the building
- Cleaning and/or re-pointing of brick and other masonry
- Replacement of deteriorated windows, doors, and/or framing visible from the street

- Removal of architecturally inappropriate or incompatible exterior finishes and materials
- Removal of chain link, or other inappropriate fencing
- Installation of fencing or screening
- American Disability Act (ADA) accessibility improvements (exterior only)
- Onsite landscaping
- Sidewalks and pedestrian access within the site
- Parking lot improvements –asphalt patching, bumpers, striping, curbing, and access management
- Signage (should be monument sign, in keeping with design or theme of façade)
- Roofs

Ineligible improvements:

- New construction
- Interior improvements
- Equipment or inventory
- Deferred maintenance
- Architectural or engineering fees associated with project planning and design
- Projects completed prior to the approval of the application
- Any projects not meeting building codes, local ordinances, or other applicable regulations
- Any projects not visible from the primary street

Initial Application Process:

Attach the following to the initial application:

- Grant amount requested
- Proof of building ownership, or if leasing the property, copy of the current lease and written approval from the building owner to undertake the project
- Up to 4 photos of current façade or site conditions (electronic photos preferred by email)
- Conceptual design plans and an outline and description of proposed improvements, including colors and a materials list
- Signage renderings that graphically indicate structure, materials, sign lettering, style, sign dimensions
- Detailed line item budget or cost estimates from a licensed construction professionals
- Submit the completed application to: Kassie Watts; Kannapolis Planning & Zoning
 - Email: kwatts@benchmarkplanning.com
 - Mailing address: 401 Laureate Way, Kannapolis, NC 28081
 - Physical address: 118 S. Main St., Kannapolis, NC
- You may request a pre-application consultation to review your proposed project and receive feedback from the review team prior to submitting an application.

Initial applications are due by 5pm on January 31, 2015.

Application Approval

An inter-departmental team of City staff reviews the initial applications and determines which applications merit further consideration. The review team reserves the right to suggest modifications to plans and will contact the applicant to review the scope of work.

Selected applicants will be required to submit final applications, including the following information:

- Final design plans and an outline and description of proposed improvements, including a materials list
- Professional design sketch or rendering of the proposed improvements, if needed (for certain types of improvements)
- Finalized line item budget or cost estimates from a licensed construction professionals
- Proof that taxes are paid and current
- Proof of current property and casualty insurance
- Evidence that contractors are licensed, bonded, and/or insured.
- Accurate color samples (required for painting approvals)
- Material samples that indicate quality of finishes
- Letter from bank, or a bank statement, that shows applicant has sufficient funding to cover full project costs.
- Sign and notarize applicant affirmation, including confirmation that you are not a City elected official, staff, or their spouse or family member.

The staff review team makes a recommendation to City Council for final approval. Staff bases grant award decisions on, among other things, the following criteria:

- Degree of improvement to the appearance of the site, building, and business district
- Degree to which project meets design standards identified in the Addendum
- Leveraging of economic activities
- Commitment from the applicant

Upon approval, the City enters into a grant contract with the applicant setting forth the scope of work as approved by the review team, payment terms, and other requirements. Proof of payment and project completion are required for reimbursement. Costs incurred prior to the signed contract date are not eligible. Applicants must notify the City if the scope of work, budget, or contractor chosen has changed from what was approved by City Council.

If qualified to do so, applicants may perform the work themselves. However, grant funds can only be used to compensate for materials, not for the labor or the purchase or rental of tools and equipment. Applicants must notify the City if they intend to do the work themselves, including using a family member or relative's company to do the work, prior to starting the project.

Applicant must obtain all necessary permits for the project. All contractors working on the project must be licensed and registered with the State of North Carolina.

Staff will be permitted to inspect the project to ensure conformance with the grant contract.

This grant program is subject to funding availability, and guidelines may be updated as necessary. Approved projects should be completed within 90 days or funds may not be guaranteed.

Questions about this program should be addressed to:

Kassie Watts

Kannapolis Planning & Zoning

704-933-5999 x112

kwatts@benchmarkplanning.com